1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

428 relationship." The maternal uncle had prior claim over the paternal.

However, the right to inherit must have meant very little when balanced against it were the exacting requirements of customary mourning. Ideally, the immediate family and even the brothers and sisters of a dead man gave away or destroyed property, their own as well as that from the estate. The [762] burial of a suicide-mother in the Yep Eaters band was in this pattern. The mother hanged herself because her son called her a bitch for not doing for him what his wife should have done. When the body was brought in by her 428 elder sister and father, they laid out a large buffalo rug over a thong. Then, 764 "on this they put all the pretty, fine things the *family* owned. They dressed the dead woman in all her finery, painted her face, combed and plaited her hair, painting the scalp red up the part. They covered her arms from wrist to elbow with silver bracelets. They put on her finest moccasins with silver dollar trimmings. She wore two beautiful belts with handsomely trimmed possible pouches, and so forth. The women dressed her body. (A man dressed a man's.) Her father sat at her head, calling on all her relatives and friends to take their last look. There was a big crowd gathered outside. 'We are going to throw her away. She is going to live in the ground,' he cried. After the people had seen her, they folded the blankets over her, folding in all the fine, pretty things; then they wound the thong about it.

"During this time the women wailed. They tore their dresses off, leaving only skin aprons to cover their mid-region. They hacked at their arms and legs and face. Some cut off an ear. The men cut their flesh, too. This was done by her immediate kin and close friends.

"They brought her horse then with its own saddle. Across it, they threw her body. They put their finest silver-mounted bridle on the horse. They all mounted their horses, and the sister led the funeral horse to a natural cave in the mountains. They put her in it with her saddle. Then they killed her mount.

"When they came back—there was her tipi where she had lived with her father. Back of it was her son's tipi. They put all their belongings inside and burned them. They had *nothing* left."[5]

When people so made themselves destitute, they were on the tribe. They were fed and cared for until they were ready to drop their mourning. Then the men of the family went afoot on a raid to get horses and start life anew.

428 In situations where the family did not spontaneously go as far as did this 626 last one, the public pressure of mourners *forced* them to further giving.

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[5] The quotations are from Talker, recorded by Jeannette Mirsky.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

Neighbors observed that these helpers in grief "wailed a dead person until they received sufficient gifts from the man's relatives to stop. For instance," he continues, "if a man wants a favorite horse belonging to the brother of the deceased, he continues crying until he obtains it." Not only the deceased's estate, but the whole family property was drawn upon. If the death occurred in battle, then the demands of wailing and the value of gifts received were enlarged with the result that "from the liberality with which they dispose of their effects on all such occasions of the kind, it would induce the belief that they acquire property merely for the purpose of giving it to others."[6]

This is the picture of Comanche disposal of an estate as it appears to be. Actually, there were undoubtedly manifold deviations and variations towards either extreme. The patterns of disposal were nebulous and not well fixed.[7]

Nothing could better reveal the difficulty of evaluating the material which confronts us than the prevailing notions as to what happened in the disposal of the herd of horses belonging to A Big Fall By Tripping. On three points all the stories agree: he had waxed so fat that no horse could carry him, hence he was dragged from place to place on a good, strong travois; when he died he was too big to move to the mountains, so they dug a hole within his tipi and dumped him in; he left an estate of one thousand to fifteen hundred horses—all white. Concerning the settlement of the estate our four accounts diverge.

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[6] Neighbors, *ibid.*, pp. 133–134.

[7] Professor Ralph Linton has acutely described the confusion and conflict in Comanche inheritance practices, laying emphasis upon the dynamics of cultural change. " . . . in 1870–1880 the practices of the Comanche with regard to inheritance were in a chaotic condition. There is good reason to believe that the whole problem of inheritance was new to the culture. The Plateau tribes from whom the Comanche had separated themselves when they entered the Plains were accustomed to destroy all a man's property at his death. This entailed few hardships and no serious economic loss, since property was limited to clothing and a few weapons and utensils. When the Comanche took over the Plains culture and acquired horses, inheritance became a real problem. Some individuals owned very large herds, in one case 2,000 animals. To slaughter the entire herd at the death of the owner was strongly against native sentiment and also prejudicial to the interests of the tribe. Since animals were freely loaned, several individuals might be dependent upon one man's herd for their mounts and would be seriously handicapped in hunting and war if these were killed. Stories indicate that there were some cases of wholesale killing during the early period, but by 1870 it had become customary to kill only a man's favorite horses and distribute the rest among the surviving relatives. No rules governing this distribution had been developed, with the result that there was usually hard feeling among the heirs." Linton, *The Study of Man*, pp. 297–298.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

174 619 rediscovered by the Yap-eaters (*Yampatikə*) and Antelope bands (*Kwɔharɛnə*), who went far southward into Mexico on a raiding expedition. The relationship was restored, and thereafter they maintained a loose alliance with their western and northern kinsmen.[17] But still they were distinct enough to help the United States troops against other Comanches—a fact remembered with bitterness by members of other bands to this very day.

Another Comanche band which the Anglo-Americans came to know well, though unfavorably, was the Those Who Move Often (*Nɔyɛka*), or *Nɔkoni* (Those Who Turn Back). Although all Comanches were nomadic, these were the real gypsies of the tribe. "They always turned back before they got to where they were going," said Eagle Tail Feather; but it is more likely that they were just drifting about, not going any place in particular. After the death of a chief [765 551] who bore the same name as his band (*Nɔkoni*), because of the tabu forbidding the speaking of a dead person's name, the band became known as *Dɔtsanɔyɛka* (Wanderers Who Make Bad Camps); they moved so much that they were slovenly in their camp habits.

In 1786, Governor Don Juan Bautista de Anza of New Mexico stated that most of the Wanderers were located between the Arkansas and the Red rivers, but that their camps were to be found across Texas as far south as the banks of the Pecos. During the nineteenth century the Wanderers generally ranged immediately north of the Wasps. Together with some of their neighbors, the *Tenawa* and the *Tanima* (Liver-eaters), they composed the group referred to as the Middle Comanches. The map based on the expeditions and accounts of Captain Marcy, 1849–52, shows the Middle Comanches along the headwaters of the Red River for about one hundred miles southward to the headwaters of the Brazos (Main, Double Mountain, Clear Fork, Salt Fork, and Middle Fork) River in the region between Fort Phantom Hill and Fort Belknap.[18] Their favorite retreat and stronghold was in the breaks of the Pease River country where they found protection from the blizzards and safety from pursuing enemies.

Another powerful band was that of the Buffalo-eaters (*Kutsuɛka*),

[17] Agent E. L. Clark to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "Report," May 18, 1881 (Oklahoma Historical Society Library, correspondence file K–13).

[18] Abel, *The Official Correspondence of James S. Calhoun*, map.

3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

place was not readily accessible. In the elevated burial the body was extended at full length, hands to the sides, and placed on robes or blankets, which were then folded closely over it, and the bundle bound with ropes or thongs of rawhide passed many times about the whole. In a few cases war parties buried their dead comrades in a water hole. Buffalo bones or skulls, stones, or something of an identifying nature were sometimes used to mark the spot of burial.[27]

When an old person died, or one whose services were no longer useful, there was little mourning and that for only a short time. On the other hand, when a young man of established fame and prestige as a warrior and hunter was killed, the mourning was intense and prolonged. The name of the dead was not mentioned. To do so was a mark of disrespect, for it revived memories and made relatives and friends prolong their mourning. For a like reason, friends and relatives avoided passing in sight of the grave, and if the band ever came back to an old camping place where a relative had died, his kinsmen began mourning all over again, but "the second mourning was not so severe; the dead can't see them so well." Female relatives testified to their grief by wailing, moaning, and howling. They tore off or removed their customary apparel and wore rags or skin aprons only. They gashed themselves across the face, arms, legs, and breast with a knife, glass, or flint until they sometimes fainted from loss of blood, and then kept the wound raw and irritated for months. Often they cut off their hair, an ear, or a finger. The present explanations for such self-imposed torture is that the pain diverted their thoughts from their grief, but among the Shoshones and Comanches there was a time when women were killed on their husbands' graves, and self-torture may have been accepted as a satisfactory self-immolation. Black paint supplanted the customary red and yellow smeared upon their copper-colored faces.

Sometimes they built a fire and held a funeral dance by marching

[27] This description of Comanche burial is compiled from statements by a number of informants; also, Parker, *op. cit.*, 137; C. and J. D. Smith, *op. cit.*, 53, 132, 162, 170; H. C. Yarrow, "A Further Contribution to the Study of the Mortuary Customs of the North American Indians," B. A. E. *First Annual Report*, 99–100; Richardson, *The Comanche Barrier to South Plains Settlement*, 42; Lee, *op. cit.*, 152; Marcy, *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border*, 56; Babb, *op. cit.*, 142, 144; Rodney Glisan, *Journal of Army Life*, 74; James Hobbs, *Wild Life in the Far West*, 33.

3; Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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765 around it while singing a doleful song. Some would remain at the grave, mourning and refusing to eat, until relatives forceably took them away. The period of intense mourning was probably from three to fifteen days' duration. Afterwards they might continue to go out from camp at sunrise and at sunset to mourn and "feel lonely" (if in summer, until the leaves fell, or if the winter, until the leaves reappeared). Although a year was considered to be the socially prescribed period of mourning for a close relative, in actual practice no set time was established. A well-to-do widow of three years who came to Marcy's camp in 1854 was still mourning her loss. It was reported that she went out every evening from camp to howl and cry and cut herself with knives. She had separated herself in a measure from the tribe and joined a group of seven other widows who were also still mourning their losses.[28]

Men sometimes cut off their hair ("they thought a lot of their hair") on one side of the head, usually the left, when a close relative or friend died or was killed. Like the women, they occasionally cut their own flesh. They smoked and prayed, and for a few days offered the first morsel of food at each meal to the supernaturals for the benefit of the dead.

768 Ideally, the immediate family and even the brothers and sisters of the dead gave away or destroyed property, their own as well as that of the estate. Articles of intimate personal usage belonging to the deceased were buried with the corpse—ornaments, trinkets, gun, lance, bow and arrows, axe, knives, pipe and tobacco, cooking utensils, and tools for dressing skins. However, an object of especial value might be held out to be given to a comrade or a dear friend of the deceased with or without his request. Possessions with medicine power were either destroyed by throwing them into the river or by placing them in a tree where they would rot. Even the tipi in which the dead person—man, woman, or child (but not a baby)—lived was burned along with the less important articles. At the funeral of a prominent warrior or member of a well-to-do family, the dead person's horse was given to his best friend or it was slain near the grave. The saddle and bridle were placed in the grave with the corpse. Several horses might be killed, even an entire herd, amounting to as many as three

[28] Parker, *op. cit.*, 192.

the patient and spirt the water from their mouths in his face, and affectionately enquire if he is better. Should the poor creature answer in the affirmative, (which is not often the case, as might well be supposed,) they attest their joy in the most ludicrous manner; but if the patient dies at this, or at a subsequent period of his illness, he is interred in the grave already dug at his door. The treatment is the same in the case of either sex, and they do not administer any kind of medicine. When a man is buried, they put his gun, powder and ball, bow and arrows, into the grave with him; and when a woman dies, they bury her as above stated, and then burn her tent and all she had; after which, they join together and build the family a new one. When a young child dies, they bury it lashed to the board on which they carry it.

But no pen can describe the extent of their wailings for the dead. When they return after a long absence, they alight from their beasts, and their women immediately turn them out, and then come and sit down at a respectful distance. Not a word of any kind is spoken by any one; the whole company is seated with the utmost silence. At length, without uttering a word, they begin to cry, and continue in this kind of exercise until it rises to a high pitch; when one of them suddenly stops, rises from his seat, and addresses the company, who at once give him their attention, while he tells them, in substance, that they have met together once more

10:Horn T-3 (1836-1837) 1955
NO6 Comanche NO6

in safety; that there is no cause for crying, and exhorts them to refrain; when, by mutual consent, they cease crying as easily as they commenced it, and go about their business. But if any of their friends have died in the fight, or otherwise, their grief appears deep and lasting. In this case, they immediately commence cutting and disfiguring themselves in a shocking manner, and with varied and unseemly gestures, accompanied with loud and tremendous yells, they seem to try to excel each other. They will ascend the loftiest peaks of the tallest mountains they can reach, and through the whole of the gloomiest night, send abroad through the surrounding forest their dismal wailings, in howls of horrid [59] accent. Nor are their signs of grief much less pungent when they lose their friends at home; but they hold all others enemies, and treat them accordingly, dead or alive. The reader has seen plenty of this in the preceding narrative; but I will here add, they fastened the scalps of our murdered friends to the bridles of their mules, so as to suspend them under the chin of the animals, and this was their constant practice while I was with them. When they encamped, they would fix them upon the top of long poles, and set them up by their tents, as I have seen flags upon garrisons, and elsewhere.

When a woman was to be confined, they removed the grass and everything else from the surface of the ground, and in a convenient place in the tent

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche N 06
Texas

[ca. 1818]

the Indian character. The Comanchees manifest their sensibilities by mourning vehemently for the dead. They continue their lamentations stately, morning and evening, for a length of time proportioned to the affinity and the consequence of the deceased. The women shave their heads and scarify themselves with knives or sharp flints, until they are literally covered with blood. Whether they have derived this practice from the discomfited prophets of Baal, (I Kings 18, 28) is for learned antiquarians to determine. The men set too much value on the velvet softness of their tawny skins, to have them scarred and serrated by so unprofitable a custom; but they will sometimes shave their heads, which is also considered a grievous retrenchment of masculine beauty. At each periodical lament, the bereaved relations assemble unitedly to bewail their departed friend. Tears are shed in copious profusion, accompanied by loud and plaintive strains of hideous dissonance, not unlike the howlings of ravening wolves. The goods and chattels of the deceased, including his tent and all its apparatus, are sometimes burnt; and such of his horses and mules as the avarice of the living will relinquish, are killed in order to be transferred to the hunting grounds of Elysium, for the future benefit and behoof of the dead. It was estimated by eye-witnesses, that during the prevalence of the small-pox among them in 1819, when they were swept off, as with the besom of destruction, there were not less than 5000 of these valuable animals immolated in this manner. The mode of conducting their funeral obsequies, I have never witnessed, and believe they sedulously avoid the observation of strangers of these occasions.

[Note. The length of this letter compels us to divide it. The rest will appear next week.]

[*The Cincinnati Literary Gazette*, June 12, 1824]

Letter IV.

[Concluded]

Vanity, certainly, is not peculiar to the Comanchees, but they possess more vanity both national and personal,

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca. 1870]

he was carried into the white man's country and that they gave him to a great monster, with wings, that lived upon the mighty waters at the place where the sun rises, and it had flown away with him. This was a long time ago. 'Our people think white men bad medicine.'"

The Comanches believe in a Supreme Being, and in many minor deities —that is, in the manifestation of a supernatural power in the operations of nature. Their religious ideas, if such a term may be allowed, are of the vaguest character. They bury their dead, with great secrecy, and place in their graves weapons and food. They believe in the immortality of man, and picture a fair paradise beyond the boundary of time. They have few ceremonies of a religious character. For the dead, they offer prayers at the rise of the sun. With their faces turned toward the rising orb of day, over the graves of their departed friends, they set up a howl sufficient to strike terror to the heart of one unaccustomed to hear them. They are not a happy people. Like all aborigines, they are grave, taciturn and moody.

Lyon's Kathairon

For Preserving and Beautifying the Human Hair, to Prevent Its Falling Out and Turning Gray.

A well preserved Head of Hair, in a person of middle age, at once bespeaks refinement, elegance, health and beauty. It may truly be called Woman's Crowning Glory, while men are Not insensible to its advantages and charms. Few things are more disgusting than thin, frizzly, harsh, untamed Hair, with head and coat covered with dandruff. Visit a barber and you feel and look like a new man. This is what LYON'S KATHAIRON will do all the time. The charm which lies in well placed Hair, Glossy Curls, Luxuriant Tresses, and a Clean Head, is noticeable and irresistible.

Missouri Republican, *November 8, 1872*

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

115 159 603 855 [765] people like now. I remember that when I was small I watched long bunch of white peoples come in here and up to today that's almost all there is around here. In them days, no fences and no white people. And my grandmother knew that before it happened. She know lot of things like that too. And when what she says happens I was sure surprised, but it made me believe her better. She had a big hunk out of her ear. She cut her ear up when her brother died in the war . . . to show how sorry she was, but I didn't know that and I would joke her and tell her, "What's the matter with your ear? Did a mule bite it off?" She would tell me what happened to it. I would ask her all sorts of things and she would always tell me something on it. She's the one who told me to take my mother's doctoring-way when I was getting older. I didn't want it because I thought it was silly or nasty, but my grandmother said that soon in the future there wouldn't be hardly any Indian doctors left and she sure was right on that. I really cried when she pass on, because she had been so good to me, bringing me along like she did. So now, up to today, my daughters got kids and my son. I try to be like my grandma. I tell them old ways that I can remember, but, you know, they don't hardly care for it. They getting to be more like white peoples every year that pass. My grandmother told me all this would happen too.

115 159 604 756 755 Sanapia's maternal uncle, an eagle doctor like her mother, was very active among peyotists in southern Oklahoma. Her first recollections of peyote meetings were those which were directed by her uncle, and it was through him that Sanapia later learned the manifold uses of peyote as a medicine. Her mother also utilized peyote as a medicine, though not to the extent to which her uncle employed it. Sanapia's paternal grandfather was also a "strong peyote man." Thus early in life Sanapia was impressed with the importance of peyote by two very influential family members.

Religious Influences

115 159 771 Sanapia was reared in an atmosphere colored by three basic approaches to supernaturalistic realms—the Christianity of her father, the peyotism of her uncle and paternal grandfather, and the more customary Plains pattern of vision quests and guardian spirits as embodied by her mother, the eagle doctor. Through this liberal education she learned the basic tenets of each and managed to syncretically combine elements of all three into the validating and supportive unity by which she now lives and finds the rationalization for her own supernatural prerogative as a Medicine woman.

She quite naturally deemphasizes the differences and emphasizes the similarities in these three supernaturalistic systems. She is very fond of making comments like the following:

115 159 771 755 You know, the bible says that when Jesus was on earth he would heal people. His disciples had that same power as Him, and I know I'm just like them. I got power in my hands to heal peoples too. You can read the bible to find out that Jesus gives those people power to help people that got sickness, and it's just like that with me. When I pray, I feel just like, well, the Lord says, "You go heal that person. I give you power to do that and give you a good mind . . . put power in your hands. When you touch anybody like that, you'll get them well." That's what I always thought, you know. Use the bible like that.